For Chrysler Corporation, computer technology is an integral part of all automobile manufacturing operations; the corporation's operations are supported by one of the world's largest computer systems—16 mainframe computers, processing 464 million instructions per second, connected to 700 terminals.

One phase of Chrysler's work is illustrated in the above photo, which shows a computer-aided design system used to create vehicle body designs, including panels, steering geometry, suspension and other systems. The imagery pictured was part of a seating study for the Chrysler LeBaron GTS, which is shown in final configuration at upper left.

One of the computer design tools employed by Chrysler engineers is a computer program developed by NASA's Lewis Research Center. Called SPAR (Structural Performance and Design), it is used to optimize the design of the outer body panels of Chrysler cars and trucks. SPAR's advantages are that it is interactive, easy to use and fast. It is used to solve relatively small problems when quick response is important; other programs provide the necessary structural analysis for large problems.

SPAR was supplied to Chrysler by NASA's Computer Software Management and Information Center (COSMIC)®, which routinely provides to industry and government customers software packages that can be adapted to uses other than those for which they were originally developed by NASA and other technology generating agencies of the government. COSMIC maintains a library of some 1,300 programs applicable to a broad spectrum of business and industry operations. ▲

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